

of the responsibility of the United Nations to encourage the peaceful settlement of disputes.

I wish to say a special word concerning the refugees. The most recent report of the Secretary-General, based on the findings of his representative, brings us once again face to face with our responsibility to preserve and strengthen "the dignity and worth of the human person". His report points to the urgent need for more international assistance of all kinds, and the Government of my country is considering how it can help further such assistance. Whatever generosity we can summon (and I know that many governments have been generous over the years in their response to the needs of the refugees in the Middle East), this will not, however, be sufficient to solve the underlying problem. It is essential that justice be done to the rights and claims of the refugees in the framework of a general settlement.

The principles of compensation, repatriation and resettlement enunciated in previous resolutions of our Assembly provide the necessary guidelines for settling the refugees in permanent homes. The parties directly concerned have moral and historical obligations towards the refugees which must be recognized; but it would be unrealistic to expect that they could, in present circumstances, carry out alone an effective programme of this kind.

I should, therefore, hope that we might give serious study to the establishment of a co-ordinated plan of international action aimed at regional development on an ambitious scale. It would help provide a basis for a solution of the refugee problem and could lead to a new era of peace and prosperity in the area. It would require the full support of the members of this organization, as well as the co-operation of the countries in the Middle East. Such a plan might encompass agricultural and mineral development, a co-ordinated approach to the development and utilization of water resources, and, if feasible, projects for desalination and the production of electric power.

It would appear essential that an international programme along these lines be carried out in conjunction with a settlement of other outstanding questions, if it is to have any prospect of success. Nevertheless, we should not delay for this reason an attempt to develop the practical programme and to establish the appropriate machinery.

Africa

Another principal area of concern to this organization over the past year has been the situation in southern Africa, particularly in Rhodesia and in South West Africa. Canada supported -- and I wish to reaffirm that support -- Resolution 2145 (XXI), which terminated the mandate of South Africa over South West Africa and brought South West Africa under the direct responsibility of this organization. We participated actively as a member of the Ad Hoc Committee for South West Africa in the search for practical means of implementing that resolution. This search has not led to arrangements for the transfer of the administration of South West Africa. I should hope, however, that the Assembly would now consider alternative approaches to this problem, including the idea of undertaking preliminary consultations with the peoples and the